



Waterbury Regional Chamber
driving business to business

**STATEMENT OF RICH DUPONT, CHAIR, WATERBURY REGIONAL CHAMBER
MANUFACTURERS COUNCIL for the COMMERCE COMMITTEE on H.B. 5517 (RAISED)
AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF CONNECTICUT MANUFACTURING WORKFORCE
NEEDS.**

March 13, 2014

Senator LeBeau, Representative Perone and members of Commerce Committee, thank you for accepting my remarks into the record regarding House Bill 5517, An Act Concerning A Study Of Connecticut Manufacturing Workforce Needs. The Waterbury Regional Chamber, which serves 13 towns in the Greater Waterbury region and represents the collective interests of more than 1,000 businesses in matters of public policy and economic development, supports this bill.

The Waterbury Regional Chamber and its partners in economic development have invested considerably in helping local manufacturers grow and thrive in recent years. The state's Advanced Manufacturing Center at Naugatuck Valley Community College and newly-opened Career Academy High School are among the most high profile of these initiatives.

The Chamber's Manufacturers Council programming includes measures to connect manufacturers with a number of key resources, including workforce development. Through its annual Manufacturing Today newspaper supplement, it helps educate the community at large of the exciting developments in this field, including career opportunities. Our annual STEM/Advanced Manufacturing and Technology Expo has also brought thousands of local middle and high school students to directly meet with manufacturers and learn about manufacturing careers during the past three years.

House Bill 5517 would further our region's goals of helping this segment address workforce needs through a Department of Economic and Community Development study. Devoting DECD's expertise to proving a report on this study by January 2015 would represent a valuable use of state resources and we urge its passage.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rich Dupont
Chair
Waterbury Regional Chamber Manufacturers Council